DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 256 828 UD 024 177

AUTHOR Wernick, Walter
TITLE Using the Swedish Model to Motivate the Development of Family/Ethnic Backgrounds as Educational Resources in American Schools.
PUB DATE [84]
NOTE 22p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cultural Background; Cultural Pluralism; Educational Objectives; *Educational Policy; *Educational Resources; Elementary Secondary Education; *Ethnic Groups; Foreign Countries; Immigrants; Models; Native Language Instruction; Public Policy; Second Language Instruction
IDENTIFIERS *Sweden

ABSTRACT

Educators rarely attempt to exploit the positive features of their students' family and ethnic backgrounds as helpful resources for instruction. Rather, they seek out students' individual differences only when problems arise. Thinking positively about the influences of particular features becomes lost in problem-centered efforts to maintain test scores and preserve the system. Energies and resources of a developing, integrative self are ignored, thus obscuring the real meaning of education: to make individuals, with personal and social identities, more productive. The first priority in catalyzing educational change is to sharpen and solidify national social policy regarding the education of students from different cultural backgrounds. Then, educational leaders must be held to a firm standard of managerial competence with respect to educational programs designed to meet those social policies. Sweden provides a model for developing such a system. In Sweden, the education of ethnics is shaped by three policies: (1) equality (assuring immigrant groups of living conditions equivalent to those of the national population); (2) freedom of choice (enabling minorities to decide the extent to which they are to retain their original cultural and linguistic identity); and (3) partnership (cooperation between minority/majority populations). These policies are implemented in several ways. Most notable is the delivery of home language instruction and Swedish language instruction to all immigrants below the age of 18. (This paper concludes with a list of recommendations for applying the Swedish model to American schools.) (KH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Walter Wernick
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED256828

USING THE SWEDISH MODEL TO MOTIVATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY/ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS AS EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS

By Dr. Walter Wernick

Few will deny that family/ethnic backgrounds influence everyday actions and shape destinies. Yet, family/ethnic backgrounds of individual students are rarely utilized in educational settings as helpful resources for instruction.

It's no wonder these backgrounds are avoided. Teachers use standardized lessons to get through overcrowded curriculums in overcrowded classrooms. If a teacher related to each student's background, instruction would have to become much more personalized -- and at the same time, teaching would become much more complex and demanding. How many teachers can give additional time and energy to such a refocusing of their work?

Nevertheless, educators are being exhorted to push "Back to Basics" improvements, computer literacy, and new technology courses into an already crowded situation. Unfortunately, critics and change-agents are not strongly advocating the refocusing of instructional relationships with individual students. Such a need is not an expressed high priority of the educational establishment or their critics -- even though their goals are similar: more productive human beings.

Perception of Family/Ethnic Backgrounds

With a "Back to Basics" orientation to a student's family/ethnic background, language and academic deficiencies are noted quickly, noted as negative factors, of course. For many, these negatives exclude all other considerations, so the

UD024177

Dr. Walter Wernick is a Professor of Education at Northern Illinois University.

familiar cry, "How can we be expected to do more when we have such problems?" stifles searches for any positive energies latent in ethnic identities.

Procedures to identify and build on positive features of family/ethnic backgrounds are rarely attempted. Negative-oriented problems play on anxieties that perfunctory plans will not work and feed on fears that discipline will dissipate. Thinking positively about the influences of particular features of family/ethnic backgrounds becomes lost in problem-centered efforts to maintain test scores and preserve the system.

Family and community resources are sought only after a "problem" is encountered. Then, student (problem), teacher, administrator, social worker, family member, and community workers are brought together to find "solutions" that fit within the "conventional wisdom" of the system.

Problem-Centered Special Programs

Generally speaking, solutions to the so-called problem are often special programs which isolate that problem (student) from the mainstream social life of the school. The solutions also reduce the student to second-class status by emphasizing remediation, especially in the "basic" subjects, the learning of common communication skills and cultural customs. Lesson planners in these special remedial programs give direct experience to students that they are more interested in what each student doesn't know and can't do than they are in what each person does know and can do.

Problems (students) are systematically reduced to "insufficient" academic particles deemed incapable of directing their own educational activities. The binding social cement of each student's unique wholeness is dissolved by analytical pedagogical methods -- methods that target present academic inadequacies rather than future relationships in adult social or economic milieus.

Energies and resources of a developing integrative self are ignored. The school, with its near-totalitarian authority over each individual's educational development, reformulates self-images to match numbers of testing programs. Meanwhile, the special programs (solutions) are abetted by analytical colleagues in the production of materials for the remedial educational market.

Students in these special programs become reserved or resentful as inner motivations to learn communication skills and participate in the school's social life die and the self-preserving organizational designs of the schooling system emerge to dominate the drives for individual identity and social expression. Few students escape the grips of the self-fulfilling prophecy which the problem-oriented educational planners have designed especially for them.

Limited English proficient and non-English speaking students, cut off from participating with others in socializing, vocational, and creative educational endeavors, lose their incentives to achieve productive roles through school programs and often carry fractured, undeveloped self-images into adulthood. Others who also expected the schools to prepare them for the world of work, but lost faith in the schooling process, fabricate wholesome career development by drawing on other sources in their homes or communities, that is, if they are fortunate enough to have access to nuturing resources.

Through failure after failure and drop-out after drop-out, educators continue crying about the "problems" they have, seemingly unaware that their perceptions of the "problems" and their "solutions" result from a muddled view of the purpose of schooling.

Our nation's human resources are being underutilized because they are being ignored at the very time they are supposed to be developed. Young people could be helped to become more productive adults, especially in their career development, if the resources of their individual family/ethnic backgrounds were

perceived as helpful to the instructional process.

The Education of Individuals

"Back to Basics" should mean back to the meaning of education, the education of individual human beings, individuals who have personal and social identities.

Instead, individual ethnic identities are treated as shadows which darken and disturb the clean petri-dish landscape of the school. A family whose chief function is caring is treated as a stand-by resource to be utilized only after school-centered programs fail. Viable cultures which have sustained and nourished social units for generations remain invisible throughout myriads of homework assignments, lessons, and conferences. Crafts, literature, music, artistic expression, social philosophy, personal relationships such as family loyalty, love, and honor -- all are excluded from the school, except as they might help the school system to maintain its patterned habits.

Well, sometimes ethnic-oriented social studies lessons dole out diminutive doses of multicultural education -- whenever the teacher can take time away from drilling the basics to taste a taco or have a fiesta of song, dance, and dioramas.

Family/Ethnic Backgrounds Influence Career Development

By ignoring the family/ethnic backgrounds of individual students, the life-blood of heritage is lost -- and much of our accumulated human potential to become and to be through the educational process is lost along with it. Career development helps a student think ahead in time. It motivates activities away from instant gratification toward long-range goals, but the organic sparks which catalyze motivation and decision-making for thinking about adult-oriented activities originate in the indwellings of one's unique personal and social history. The yeast of our maturing career development lies in each individual's past, a personal and a social past at one and the same time.

The old saying "Nuttin' comes from nuttin'" is not true when it comes to career development. A vacuum in a personal energy system draws in "growth" material from outside. Greedy commercial and anit-social forces work avariciously to put and take for their own gain, with the young especially vulnerable.[1]

Career imaging built with the shifting fancies of peer pressure, media hype, and computerized printouts of objective occupational information has no solid center, no core of personal identity. A firm feelingful foundation is needed for a person's career development, a foundation that necessitates the use of individual family/ethnic backgrounds and the education of individual human beings.

ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS ARE RESOURCES

When backgrounds of individual students are perceived as problems, the educational goal of working with individuals is easily overcome by organizational procedures. That's understandable. As in many areas of our institutionalized life, it is a struggle to keep institutions on target -- to keep educational issues the center of an educational institution.

Let's not give up the struggle. Educational leadership must focus on its educational mission.

Increasing Teaching Resources

If educators started with each learner's family/ethnic background, more resources would be brought to the educational scene instantly -- resources that

---

[1] One reading of the classic poem I AM JOAQUIN by Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales gives more than enough substance and spirit for the need to build on the positive features of family/ethnic background.

can build positive programs, resources that can prevent problems before they germinate, resources that can advance educational activities for families, schools, and communities.

Each learner's life is a valuable resource. That fact should not be ignored in any setting, of course, but educators have a distinctive hallowed responsibility to enhance that concept and implement it in social settings. Teaching, instruction, even schooling must be life-centered.

Recognition that family/ethnic customs, traditions, and values may be brought into the educational process of conceptual development, for skill-building, and for motivation is a first step. Awareness of the student as a resource, as potentially helpful to the work of teachers, will initiate the gathering of information about a student's background through more comprehensive diagnostic procedures and more empathic analysis of feedback during the instructional process. Then, as educators learn of the student's position in the family, sex role in his or her social unit, perceptions of occupational roles in the world of work and citizenship roles in the community, and other important influences regarding self-image and career development, school programs will become less problem-centered, more participatory.

Face-to-face realization of how individuals live and learn should cause a turning of the mind's eye. As teachers develop insights about the backgrounds, behaviors, and motivations of their students, they will turn away from shuffling through standardized stuffings. Their perceptions will passionately move them to work collaboratively with the inner drives of their students, the expectations of their parents, and the historical contributions of their culture. After all, teachers are dedicated and reasonable people -- and, lest we forget, teachers are also supervised and managed. They are held accountable for their actions by supervisors and managers.

Management and Leadership

Gathering more resources, especially from individuals engaged in the educational process, will require a different management of that process. Managers in the central office, as well as in the classroom, will need to know that underutilization of accessible resources is grounds for incompetence, that ignorance and/or avoidance of the family/ethnic factors will be judged as poor productivity. Managers have to know that ignoring the student as a resource puts teachers and all educational personnel at risk. Perhaps a nation at risk was too broad a term; the education crisis needs to be brought closer to home.

The work risk implies responsibility. School administrators who do not see management of educational enterprises in this dimension need to be educated or replaced. Teachers will follow their leadership -- and leadership will follow the mandates of their communities. Some communities have well expressed goals. Most do not. They swing and sway with state or federal funding policies.

Social Policy and Educational Direction

The first priority in catalyzing change in our schools is to sharpen and solidify national social policy regarding the education of students from many different cultural backgrounds in our pluralistic society. Then, educational leaders must be held to a firm standard of managerial competence with respect to educational programs designed to meet those social policies.

And that brings this piece to reflection of experiences in Sweden during May and June of 1983.

THE SWEDISH MODEL

Three policies shape the dimensions of Swedish thinking with respect to the education of ethnics. (In Sweden, the education of immigrants is used,

but there is a growing movement throughout the European community to use the term "ethnics" when referring to migrants or immigrants.) These social policies, or national goals, aid in the allocation of funding, the development of professional staff, the implementation of educational programs, and the evaluation of personnel in programs related to the education of ethnics.

Briefly, the goals are: equality, freedom of choice, and partnership.

Swedish educational leaders know they are being held accountable for the delivery of programs as they relate to these expressed national social policies. As a result, the various educational and social systems (and Sweden is a country of systems) are tuned to the accomplishment of publicity known and targeted goals. Professionals within their special system work within a frame; they know their evaluation will be in terms of how well they are succeeding in reference to stated social goals.

Equality

The first goal is equality. Quoting the 1983 publication IMMIGRANTS AND IMMIGRANT TEACHING IN SWEDEN,[2]

> "The goal of equality implies continuing efforts to assure immigrant groups of living conditions equivalent to those of the national population. Accordingly, the goal of equality means that the same rules must apply to immigrants and Swedes in all sectors of society and that immigrants must be given the opportunity of achieving a standard of living corresponding to that of the population generally.
>
> Maintenance of the goal of equality is conditional among other things on immigration being constantly adapted to the ability of society to provide immigrants with employment, housing, social care and education on the same terms as the rest of the population.

---

[2] Immigrants and Immigrant Teaching in Sweden, Statistics Sweden, 115 81 Stockholm, 1983, p. 6.

The goal of equality also means that linguistic minorities should have access to information, education and cultural amenities corresponding to those available to the majority population. Thorough instruction in the Swedish language should give immigrants the opportunity to adjusting to and participating in Swedish society, and various steps should be taken to eliminate social and linguistic barriers preventing immigrants from availing themselves of the amenities of the Swedish education system and cultural manifestations in the Swedish language.

It is important to make clear, however, that equal conditions in the cultural and educational spheres also mean that society must take steps to give immigrants and their children genuine opportunities of preserving their own language, engaging in independent cultural activities and keeping in touch with their country of origin, just as the majority population is able to preserve and develop its language and cultural traditions.

In keeping with the goal of equality, minority policy should be aimed at enabling linguistic minorities, within the framework of a community of interest embracing the whole of Swedish society, to maintain and secure respect for their own linguistic and cultural identity."

Freedom of Choice

The second goal, freedom of choice, means that,

"...linguistic minorities domiciled in Sweden must be enabled by the community to decide for themselves the extent to which they are to retain and develop their original cultural and linguistic identity and the extent to which they are to assume a Swedish cultural identity. To this end, the various immigrant groups must be given financial and other support for the development of independent cultural activities, and general cultural amenities in Sweden must be tailored more closely to the needs which have arisen through immigration. Measures for the preservation of contact with the culture of his country of origin will also make it easier for the individual immigrant and his children to choose between staying here or returning to and being re-integrated with their country of origin."[3]

---

[3] Immigrants and Immigrant Teaching in Sweden, Statistics Sweden, 115 81 Stockholm, 1983, p. 6.

Partnership

The third goal of partnership (or cooperation as it has sometimes been translated into English) means that,

> "...fruitful cooperation should be established between immigrant and minority groups and the majority population. This goal also includes mutual tolerance and solidarity between immigrants and the native population. This means that the various minority groups must become, and be seen to be, equal partners in society, which in turn means that they must be given support in establishing their own news publications. The goal of partnership also means that immigrants should be induced to participate in Swedish public affairs and that it must be made easier for them to play an active part in Swedish politics and trade union affairs. Immigrants and linguist minorities must be associated with the framing of decisions having a direct bearing on their situation. The goal of partnership is also aimed at using education and information to enhance understanding for people of different origins, so that expression will be given to the community of interest between immigrants and minority groups and the population generally and conflicts of national or linguistic interest will thus be avoided. In this connection, attention should be paid to the positive cultural effect of immigration."[4]

These social goals give rise to a variety of educational and training programs for people of all ages, collaborative activities amongst the various systems serving immigrants in light of the stated social policies, research activities, and a special focus on the home language (mother tongue) of children from immigrant families.

Perhaps this is the time to note that one child of every four born in Sweden today is a child of an immigrant family. Over one million of the slightly more than eight million living in Sweden are classified as immigrants. That should help one understand the magnitude of concern as the Swedes see the situation.

---

[4] Immigrants and Immigrant Teaching in Sweden, Statistics Sweden, 115 81 Stockholm, 1983, p. 7.

COMPONENTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL DELIVERY SYSTEM

Only a few highlights of Swedish educational practices will illustrate how policies regarding immigrants are implemented.

Home Language Instruction

Perhaps the single most notable program is the Swedish dedication to and delivery of home language instruction to immigrants below the age of 18. Home language lessons and home language study guidance has been offered to all compulsory school pupils and upper secondary school students having a minority language as their home language. In addition, home language training at the pre-school level is given to five and six year olds. Over 3,900 home language teachers were employed in 1981, teaching over fifty different languages in educational settings.

A home language teacher may work in one school building, or may be an itinerant teacher and meet with students in several different buildings, but the home language teacher is special. A home language teacher must be properly prepared and certified.[5]

Special materials are produced in Sweden for teachers of home languages. Swedish educators are concerned with the propaganda built within materials published in other countries and have established procedures by which products may be developed for use with their own children, if that approach is deemed

---

[5] I met a few teachers of Swedish who were immigrants themselves, but their degrees from foreign universities did not enable them to teach their mother tongue. As I said before, Sweden is a country of systems. The Swedes and the immigrants living in Sweden have learned to adapt to this condition of life.

necessary.[6]

There is also provision for pre-school children enrolled in day nurseries and play schools to receive home language training. During 1981-82, 59.2 per cent of those eligible for the home language program received it.

A deliberate policy guides educational efforts. Swedish researchers and politicians are still debating monolingualism, bilingualism, and multilingualism, and new research is still being initiated about the benefits of home language instruction to children of various ages from many quarters, but the national system of education is working on programs to develop human potential - and the country's resources - by focusing on the education of individual learners. That fact stands out above all others. That is dedication to education in its best sense.

Instruction in Swedish

The Swedish policies recognized that,

> "Trying as an immigrant to cope in a country with a foreign language, different values and attitudes and a new social and cultural environment implies a very delicate and awkard situation.
>
> In this situation, limited or inadequate knowledge of the new language is a serious handicap which impairs one's opportunities in the labour market and makes it difficult or impossible to avail oneself of different forms of adult education, e.g. vocational education. This limits one's ability to live in the community on the same terms as the native population, which in turn produces a difficult and unfavorable social situation which can have profound and far reaching consequences of a negative nature, reflected not least by immigrants' children - the second generation of immigrants.

---

[6]Quite a difference from the way Chicago educators sent to Spain to obtain materials in Spanish to work with children from Mexico and Puerto Rican family/ethnic backgrounds, as I heard at a Leadership Institute on Job Training for the Limited English Proficient on September 29, 1983 in Springfield, Illinois.

> Swedish language instruction is often the only possible way in the immigrants can be helped to lay the foundation of the language learning which will eventually enable him to communicate with Swedish-speaking persons, assimilate information concerning his rights and obligations, as well as other public information, and avail himself of the cultural amenities and adult education opportunities which the community has to offer."[7]

Immigrant learners receive instruction in Swedish and are given help through special "floating" teachers within the school and their home language teachers. There have been a few "experiments" where instruction in mathematics and other subjects were delivered in the home language of the learner, but, generally speaking, students are expected to learn Swedish as well as their home language.

Adults have a different situation. As the 1983 publication states,

> "Experience and certain survey findings suggest that the educational situation is inequitable to immigrants in various ways.
>
> Greater efforts are needed in order to give adult immigrants genuinely equal opportunities and to improve their chances of taking part in adult education by eliminating social, linguistic and other barriers to educational activity.
>
> The goal of freedom of choice holds implications concerning the course content, working methods and environment of adult education. Greater importance comes to center around education relating to various home languages and different cultures. The stronger position given to home language in various types of education, for both educational and social reasons, will establish foundations on which to broaden cultural amenities in different languages and improve the changes of bilingualism being regarded as an asset to society.
>
> In order to realize the goal of partnership, immigrants must be given powers to co-determination in adult education. In addition, questions of attitude must be dealt with at different levels.

---

[7] Immigrants and Immigrant Teaching in Sweden, Statistics Sweden, 115 81 Stockholm, 1983, p. 75.

> A good knowledge of the Swedish language and of the workings of society is one of the prerequisites of partnership and co-operation. Another prerequisite is for staff and participants in adult education to know about the background and culture of immigrants.
>
> To the adult immigrant, Swedish language instruction, information and social education are crucially important for the improvement of partnership, just as home language instruction has a crucial bearing on greater freedom of cultural choice where children are concerned."[8]

Through "study circles" and a variety of other means, adult immigrants are helped to learn Swedish. Present Swedish law entitles each adult immigrant to 240 hours of paid leave of absence for instruction in Swedish during the time of employment. Several powerful groups are now lobbying to increase that time to over 500 hours. These people want the law to dictate social policy -- and they want effective educational programs for individual human beings as a result of that social policy.

The people of Sweden have dedicated themselves to the dignity and worth of each individual residing in their country.[9] Returning then to the main topic of this piece, developing family/ethnic backgrounds as educational resources for individual students in American schools, this brief overview of the Swedish model offers three ideas:

---

[8] Immigrants and Immigrant Teaching in Sweden, Statistics Sweden, 115 81 Stockholm, 1983, p. 75.

[9] An interesting topic to explore would be how the Swedish systems responded to the needs of refugees living in Sweden. I was extremely impressed by their sincere and supportive programs. Statistics for the various parts of the many systems operating to serve the education, social, and employment needs of immigrants can be obtained through the Swedish Institute in Stockholm and through other sources.

1. A nation's social policy can guide educational programs.

2. The needs of individuals can be the focal point for educational programs.

3. Managers of educational systems can relate the work of their teachers to a positive approach to each individual's family/ethnic background, at least to the home language of the person to be educated.

Further Observations

In addition to the exemplary social policies and massive efforts to provide home language instruction, the Swedish government gives child allowances and educational allowances so families and their children can have decent living standards.

Youth centers for 16-18 year olds that did not go to the upper secondary school were moving toward expanded career development programs as were the employment centers for youth run by the county authorities.

Also the new 1980 curriculum (LGR) promulgated by the National Board of Education (SO) focuses the work of Swedish educators on integration of subject matter; on cooperative, rather than competitive modes of learning and living; work-experience in a variety of community settings (through the SYO program); and many other significant ways to develop life-centered education.

However, perhaps because Sweden is a country of systems where knowledgeable experts are expected to function with firm authority, parents are <u>not</u> usually involved in the work of the school. Parents receive reports of their children's progress and achievements, but they do <u>not</u> work as volunteers in the school, are <u>not</u> utilized as resource people, and do <u>not</u> collaborate with professional staff and other members of the community as members of advisory committees.

Other aspects impacting the life of immigrants in Sweden (the role of employers, housing, and social services) will not be discussed, but before

specific recommendations are presented for American schools, a few facts about language backgrounds in Illinois might help set the stage.

POPULATION UPDATE IN ILLINOIS

The 1980 Census indicates that 1,250,000 people in Illinois, age 5 or older, speak a language other than English at home. The Illinois Bilingual Census FY83 gives over 154,000 (K-12) students with a home language other than English, and almost 53,000 students with English proficiency below average for age and grade level. Projections for the year 2000 estimate 101,800 persons between the ages 5-14 will have a non-English background or limited English proficiency. Of course, immigration policies will be a factor in the percentage of population using other languages than English as their mother tongue, but approximately twenty per cent of the total population of the state of Illinois can be expected to have limited or no English proficiency as the clock clicks into the next century.

Cook County has the highest percentage of people in these categories, but other areas of the state are attracting more of the limited or non-English speaking groups as services and community support for such groups grow.

Another figure worthy of note is that fifty percent of people of Spanish origin in Illinois have not completed high school and 31.5 per cent have only an eighth grade education or less.

These figures do not include the state's share of the one million American children and youth under the age of 21 in migrant families. A midwestern stream of legal aliens and American citizens travels through Illinois for work. Quite a few leave the migrant stream to settle in the state every year.

BEST COPY

RECOMMENDATIONS

A snapshot of the Swedish model motivated discussion about:

1. The importance of national policies for meeting the personal, economic, and citizenship needs of individuals.

2. The need to focus on the ethnic identities of individuals in order to deliver quality educational programs to them.

3. The work of educational leaders to plan their programs to meet national goals.

4. The development of an extensive home language instructional program for all children and youth of immigrant (ethnic) families.

5. The need for various social and educational institutions to collaborate in the delivery of services to provide a quality living experience for all citizens.

However, the focus of the Swedish educational endeavors is almost entirely on language. Other dimensions of family/ethnic background are almost totally ignored or thought of as insignificant to the implementation of their social policies.[10]

---

[10] In Umeå, a city of 100,000 in northern Sweden which has a large Finnish speaking population, when asked about the use of Finnish art, literature, drama, and crafts in the educational program, the response was that since Finland was only a short boatride across the water, the Finnish-speaking students could see plays and get Finnish culture directly from their relatives. Swedish educators apparently saw no need to utilize their students' ethnic backgrounds in their regular academic programs. That idea was not part of the system.

Also, in Gislaved, which is well noted for its excellent school musical programs, when asked if the music of any of the immigrant groups comprising 17 per cent of the population was included in their programs, the response was smiles and an offer of another piece of Princess Cake. They hadn't considered it, my host said; and besides they all agreed, the immigrant societies in the region hadn't requested such a modification. Again, the system was in place. The Swedish educators believed it was up to the immigrants' societies to request such a modification.

BEST COPY

Back to the positive recommendations. These ideas can also be implemented:

1. Teachers must help children and youth to become resource people within their own families and social units. Students learn the infrastructure of their own society through planned educational experiences and can do much to convey information about transportation, banking, health services, parks, libraries, vocational training and other community services to people in their families who can act upon such information.

   The term resource people was carefully chosen. Children can not become the decision-makers. Therefore, children need to be carefully taught how to introduce information into their family settings. Each family/ethnic background has its own distinctive way of gathering and processing information.[11]

2. Career development can be an organizing center for instruction. A sequence of life-centered activities focusing on personal and social values and integrating several subjects in a core approach can be planned. New materials and staff development programs need to accompany the initiation of this approach.[12]

---

[11]Background material by the author includes:

"The Ethnic Imprint of Career Options," Journal of Career Education, Vol. 8, No. 3, March 1982, pp. 169-172.

A Life-Centered Education Course for High School Migrant Youth, EDUCATION/CETA Linkage Project, DeKalb Public Schools, DeKalb, Illinois, 1982, 383 pages.

[12]Related material by the author includes:

Introducing Career Education to Teachers: A Handbook for Consultants, Workshop Leaders, and Teacher Educators, ABLE Model Program, Northern Illinois, University, DeKalb, Illinois, April 1972, (ed.). (ERIC: ED 067487)

The Organizing Center: An Instrument for Implementing Life-Centered Education, ABLE Model Program, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois, 1973, (ed.). (ERIC: ED 094210)

A Career Education Primer for Educators, Information Series #4, ERIC, Northern Illinois University with David V. Tiedeman, John Eddy, and Betty J. Bosdell, 1975. (ERIC: ED 113 486)

"Surprise! Seen from the Side, Career Education is Citizenship Education," Journal of Career Education, Vol. VI, No. 3, pp. 187-195, March 1980.

More recent suggestions were published in:

Staff Development Guide to Focus on Life-Centered Education for Migrant Youth, EDUCATION/CETA Linkage Project, DeKalb Public Schools, DeKalb, Illinois, 1981, 165 pages. (Available through ERIC-CRESS ED 213535)

BEST COPY

3. Adult role models as they are actively involved in their work need to be brought into direct contact with children and youth. To be specific, students need to see how adults from traditional, transitional, and assimilated ethnic backgrounds cope with varied activities in the world of work. How do family/ethnic values fare when faced with the sterilizing demands of corporate life? What happens when family sex roles clash with the work roles which are increasingly being enforced by law? What happens to people's feelings about personal identity? to their habits of communication? to their concepts of time?

   Preaching about the demands of the world of work to the ignorant, inexperienced young isn't teaching. An educator manages a learning environment so students receive direct experience from relevant sources. Again, people are primary sources of knowledge, and budding scholars, whatever their level of English proficiency or academic prowess, should be helped to study from these primary sources.[13]

4. The teaching of interviewing has to be interwoven throughout the curriculum. Children from many ethnic backgrounds do not learn to ask questions of adults in their homes. Many children learn to be seen, but not heard. Politeness, control of feelings, and exact reproduction of adult behavior through rote learning is very often the way of life for young in many families. Interviewing as a means to develop personal and social relationships, as a way to gather career development skills, and a vehicle to aquire occupational information and up-to-date knowledge of the work environment in the community has been treated extensively in several publications. There is no substitute for the exchange of attitudes and values that can be accomplished through planning for the interviewing experience, the person-centered interview, and the follow-up of the student's impressions in academic and social settings.[14]

---

[13] A pioneer piece in this area was the author's:

Teaching for Career Development in the Elementary School: A Life-Centered Approach, Charles Jones Publishing Co., Worthington, OH, 1973, 230 pages. (ERIC: ED 078204)

[14] A book of practical suggestions co-authored with James Conley was:

Interview Strategies for Career Development: Basic Skills for Life, ARGUS, Niles, Illinois, 1976, 100 pages.

BEST COPY

5. In order to help each student develop his or her interests, learn to resolve conflicts between his or her family/ethnic-oriented values and those of the school or the world of work, build a relationship with his or her primary social unit by helping each student learn how to become a responsible resource person within his or her family -- and, to be quite blunt, not to be such an insensitive clod in a teaching role -- teachers need to learn to become more effective diagnosticians, or they need to learn to utilize the services of experts in the understanding of family/ethnic backgrounds.

   The concept of diagnosis needs to be firmly introduced into educational planning -- and the diagnostic work has to focus on positive strengths as well as deficiencies. Teachers have to learn how family loyalties and ethnic work ethics, for example, can help instruction become more productive. The problem approach must be replaced with a commitment to knowing each participant in the learning process as an individual with a personal and social history. [15]

6. Wouldn't it be convenient if when a new student of "Atlantis" origin arrives in the school or class, an educational diagnostician could punch a code on a computer and receive a print-out about the characteristics of the "Atlantis" ethnic group? (Comments about the group might lead to stereotyping, of course, but is ignorance any better?)

   Contemporary information technology could be utilized to help educators learn how ethnic backgrounds could become educational resources. Our profession has thousands of dry (and often inert) behavioral objectives in subject centered banks. Imagine how information about family/ethnic backgrounds could become easily accessible. Imagine how the productivity of life-centered educators could be enhanced. A world-wide network of systems contributing information about family/ethnic backgrounds, and possibly suggestions for teachers, would bring us closer to the global community our cosmic consciousness tell us is ours.[16]

---

[15] How many of us would submit to a major operation without requesting a comprehensive diagnostic work-up involving our complete medical history? Barbara Kies and Dorothy Wells collaborated with the author to illustrate practical ways for teachers to become diagnosticians as they carry on their teaching in:

101 Activities for Career Development, Success Research Consultants, Elgin, Illinois, 1979, 218 pages.

[16] THE MIGRANT STUDENT RECORD TRANSFER SYSTEM may serve as an initial model for the development of this resource. The MSRTS is in place at the State Department of Education, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72201 (501 371 7754).

BEST COPY

7. The last suggestion is not as grandiose as the global computer-assisted information network, but it is as far reaching: schooling needs to be an idea, not a place.

Education can take place anywhere. A life-centered educational program moves to wherever educational activities should take place -- homes, community agencies, governmental facilities, business and industrial worksites, libraries, and shopping centers.

Schools don't need to be renewed. Rather, the role of learning in human activities and the role of educational workers in that enterprise needs to be reviewed, reviewed in light of national and global priorities.[17] Each educator can make a start toward this educational renewal by identifying several new resource sites in the community immediately surrounding the school, then personally visiting with the people who work there.

Person-to-person contact through face-to-face interviewing -- across a desk, near a lathe, by a cash register, by an oven, a computer, a truck, a freezer, a cattle pen, a field of grain, or in an orchard. Teachers will not remain mere information-givers once they have become infused with the lifeblood of adult work activities in their communities.

Meeting men and women of many differing ethnic backgrounds, realizing that our pluralistic society is employing the resources of those backgrounds in productive work, and imagining how the young of today will make the transition to responsible adulthood are all transformational elements of an educator's kaleidoscope. If managers would motivate individual teachers to add to the depth and focus of their own educational kaleidoscopes, teachers, as educators, will see their missions more clearly -- and more colorfully.

I am hopeful movement in the profession will come as each teacher realizes the need to take a step out of the abstract academic world and participate actively in the mainstream of social, economic, and political activities in the community.

I'm also hopeful many of us will do this together

---

[17] The need to refocus national social policies and educational programs is evident after reading Leon F. Bouvier's provocative "Human Waves" in the August 1983 issue of Natural History.
The author suggested progress toward specific targets in:

"Toward Life-Centered Education," Thresholds in Education, May 1980, Vol. VI, No. 2, pp. 14-16.

BEST COPY